PALOMAR AIRPORT TO CONDUCT DISASTER EXERCISE
Oct. 1 Event Will Test Emergency Response, Equipment and Inter-agency Teamwork

McClellan-Palomar Airport will be the scene of a major disaster-exercise Oct. 1, when County airport officials, law enforcement agencies, the American Red Cross and community members will stage a mock landing accident to test their ability to respond.

County officials said people who live in the area should not be alarmed by increased activity on the morning of the exercise, including sirens, emergency vehicles entering and exiting the airport and the presence of a large number of law enforcement and emergency responders. The airport runway will be closed for 15 to 20 minutes when the exercise starts at 9 a.m., but will reopen for normal operations immediately afterward.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requires disaster exercises to be held every three years to ensure emergency personnel can act quickly and effectively. County airport officials said this exercise would focus on testing communications, aircraft and victim rescue, firefighting capability, aircraft operations during an disaster, security and the ability of the different agencies to work together.

"This exercise will demonstrate the effectiveness of the systems and procedures we have in place at Palomar Airport that are in full compliance with FAA standards," said Palomar-McClellan Airport Manager Willie Vasquez. "In an emergency, Palomar Airport Rescue is able to respond immediately with backup from Carlsbad Fire."

Media who wish to observe the exercise should contact Michael Drake at (858) 495-5736 or at Michael.Drake@sdcounty.ca.gov to arrange advance clearance.

For more information, contact Olivier Brackett at (760) 966-3271.

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